

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 15. (canceled).

16. (currently amended): A device for the dressing of cut tobacco in a particular distributor for the production of cigarettes, the tobacco being introduced into the distributor and being treated within the ~~letter-distributor~~ by loosening up, by elimination of ~~(tobacco)~~ tobacco lumps and by sifting, and preparing the tobacco for forming a tobacco strand, with the aid of a metering system (12), **characterized by** the following features:

a) a cone-type sifter (15) for sifting the tobacco, wherein the sifter on one hand and the distributor for loosening up the tobacco and for elimination of the lumps on the other hand are separate ~~equipment~~ equipments, the distributor being arranged in a distributor housing (17) ~~on one hand and (17)~~, and the sifter being arranged in a separate sifter housing (16) ~~on the other hand, outside the distributor housing (17)~~, and

b) the tobacco is first conveyed through the sifter (15) and after sifting the tobacco is conveyed by a connecting line (20) into the distributor or into the distributor housing (17) respectively.

17. (currently amended): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/533,221

a) the tobacco is conveyed into the sifter (15) by a supply line (19) at an upper side of the sifter housing (17), while air is introduced into the sifter (15) by an airline (26) at a lower ~~side-area~~ of the sifter (15), and

b) the connecting line (20) for conveying the sifted tobacco into the sifter housing is arranged at the upper side of the sifter housing (16) on one hand and the distributor housing (17) on the other hand.

18. (currently amended): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the sifter (15) ~~is a cone-type sifter with~~ has an upright guide body (21) within the cylindrical sifter housing (16), the sifter housing (16) being cylindrical,

b) the guide body is of circular cross-section and consists of preferably two double cones arranged one above the other,

c) the guide body is arranged centrally within the sifter housing (16) and is surrounded by a guide wall (22) of circular cross section, and

d) the guide wall (22) runs at a distance from an outer service area of the guide body (21) forming a wavy or ~~zigzag-chapped~~ zigzag-shaped sifting duct (23) between the guide body (21) and the guide wall (22).

19. (canceled).

20. (currently amended): The device according to claim 16, **characterized in that** the distributor and the sifter (15) are mounted on a machine stand (18) for both ~~equipment~~ said equipments.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. APPLN. NO. 10/533,221

21. (previously presented): The device according to claim 18, **characterized in that** within the sifter (15) namely within the sifter housing (16) a collecting chamber for sifted tobacco is arranged above the guide body, the connecting line (20) being connected to the sifter (15) at the collecting chamber (31).

22. (canceled).

23. (previously presented): The device according to claim 17, **characterized by** the following features:

- a) the airline (26) for conveying air into the sifter (15) is connected to the sifter (15) in the area of a chamber (27) in the lower area of the sifter (15),
- b) the guide wall surrounding the guide body (21) is designed to be air-permeable by an obliquely directed or conical sieve (28).

24. (previously presented): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

- a) the connecting line (20) for conveying the sifted tobacco from the sifter (15) into the distributor is connected to the distributor housing (70) at a lock (10) within the distributor housing (17),
- b) a bottom of the lock consists of flaps (33) which are pivoted downwards in order to open the lock (10) to the distributor.

25. (canceled).

26. (new): The device according to claim 16, wherein the sifter housing (16) is cylindrical, and the sifter (15) has an upright guide body (21) within the housing (16).